



"In here there are no strangers..."

Sisters Of The Road

...just friends we've never met."

For Immediate Release

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BELOVED CO-FOUNDER OF SISTERS OF THE ROAD TO RETIRE

Portland, Oregon (November 10, 2009) – Genny Nelson, Sisters Of The Road's co-founder, will be retiring in December. She will be honored with a celebration open to the community on Saturday, December 12th from 3 to 6 pm in Sisters' Cafe, 133 NW 6th Avenue in Portland. In lieu of flowers, Nelson asks that people make a contribution to Sisters Of The Road, the organization she helped found and develop and the community she continues to love.

In 1979, Nelson and Sandy Gooch co-founded Sisters Of The Road in Portland's Old Town Chinatown Neighborhood. The organization's model was result of thousands of one-to-one conversations Nelson and Gooch had with those who lived in the neighborhood, who overwhelmingly asked for a safe place where they could dine on nutritious, hot meals with dignity at a small cost (\$1.50), and where they could barter their work if they had no cash for a meal. "From the start, Sisters was guided by these beliefs: People are made up of heart, mind, body and soul. When confronted with a problem, if the solution disregards this fact and only addresses a part of the person, it will fail in the end. Solutions must be as unique as the homeless man, woman, youth or child who is asking for your help. Sisters would never do for anyone what they can do for themselves," states Nelson.

Throughout Sisters' 30 year history, Nelson has filled almost every role at Sisters – Executive Director, Operations Manager, Director of Community Organizing, and Associate Director of Systemic Change, as well as all day-to-day jobs within the Cafe. More importantly, Nelson has been a personal friend and mentor to thousands, including public leaders, school children and Sisters' staff, volunteers & customers. Her enduring adherence to the tenets of nonviolence and gentle personalism have inspired and touched countless lives over her three decades at Sisters.

Nelson has won numerous awards. Some highlights include: 1991: Mayor's Spirit of Portland Award; 1993: Steven Lowenstein Trust Award and Public Citizen of the Year from the National Association of Social Workers, Oregon Chapter; 2002: Woman of the Year Award from the Portland YWCA; and 2005: the National Caring Award, which honors and promotes the values of caring, integrity, and public service inspired by Mother Teresa. To read Genny's speech at the Caring Award ceremony, please view it at Sisters' website, via <http://tiny.cc/fp1Yc>.

All are welcome to attend Nelson's retirement celebration in Sisters' Cafe. Appetizers, beverages and desserts will be served.

ABOUT SISTERS OF THE ROAD: Founded in 1979, Sisters Of The Road uses nonviolence to support community driven solutions to the calamities of homelessness and poverty. Sisters' cafe is open to everyone, serving low cost, hot, nutritious meals. Sisters also provides job training, support to parents and children, and innovative solutions to the issues surrounding poverty and homelessness through self and community advocacy.

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